

# Fact Sheet

[www.abs.gov.au/census](http://www.abs.gov.au/census)



## PLACE OF WORK (POWP)

Place of Work (POWP) data provides information on where people work. The address of each **employed** person's main place of work, in the week prior to Census Night, is used to code to a Destination Zone.

Destination Zones are designed by State and Territory Transport Authorities (STAs). As a result, the indexes and boundaries are the property of the STAs. Destination Zones are used in conjunction with Place of Usual Residence data to analyse transport patterns and subsequently assist in the planning for transport systems.

### CHANGES TO VARIABLE NAMES AND THEIR MNEMONICS

For the 2006 Census, the variable Place of Work (POWP) replaced Journey to Work (JTW). As with the 2001 JTW variable, POWP is a hierarchical field and can be broken down into State, Study Area, Statistical Local Area and Destination Zone. For a detailed explanation see the *Census Dictionary 2006* (cat. no. 2901.0) and the *Statistical Geography Volume 2 Census Geographic Areas 2006* (cat. no. 2905.0).

### CHANGES TO GEOGRAPHIC COVERAGE

In censuses prior to 2001, JTW Study Areas were limited to major urban areas in each state and territory. For the 2001 Census, Destination Zones were expanded to encompass the whole of Australia (excluding External Territories). From 2001, the POWP variable included the Territories of Jervis Bay, Cocos Keeling Islands and Christmas Island (Other Territories).

### STUDY AREAS

Each workplace address given by respondents is coded to a Study Area. Study Areas are designed by the transport authorities in each state and territory and cover all of Australia.

#### Detailed Study Areas

Detailed Study Areas are comprised of Destination Zones which aggregate to Statistical Local Areas. In Detailed Study Areas, the lowest level of the POWP hierarchy is the Destination Zone. Note that Destination Zones do not concord with Census Collection Districts (CDs) but they do aggregate to Statistical Local Areas. Destination Zones are designed to define where people work, not where they live.

#### Extended study areas

Extended Study Areas are comprised of Destination Zones which aggregate to Statistical Local Areas. These generally comprise physically larger Destination Zones or instances where a Destination Zone is the direct equivalent of a Statistical Local Area, frequently where the Destination Zone code is 9000.

#### Coding Conventions

- the POWP Detailed Study Area is allocated a code of 1, preceded by the relevant state code e.g. 11 indicates NSW POWP Detailed Study Area; and
- the POWP Extended Study Area is allocated a code of 2, preceded by the relevant state code e.g. 12 indicates NSW POWP Extended Study Area.

## DESTINATION ZONES

This is the smallest spatial unit to which POWP is coded. The main workplace address given by respondents for the week prior to Census Night is coded to a Destination Zone. For output purposes, Destination Zones aggregate to SLAs, as Statistical Local Areas are a standard output unit for Census data.

Destination Zones are defined by the transport authorities in each state and territory and cover all of Australia.

### Coding Conventions

Destination Zones are not allocated names. The coding conventions are as follows:

- within a POWP Detailed Study Area, a ten-digit code is assigned comprising state/territory code (digit 1), Study Area code (digit 2), Statistical Local Area code (digits 3–6) and a Destination Zone code (digits 7–10); and
- within a POWP Extended Study Area, a ten-digit code is assigned comprising state/territory code (digit 1), Study Area code (digit 2), Statistical Local Area code (digits 3–6) and a reserved Destination Zone code (digits 7–10).

## DATA INTERPRETATION

### Reference Period Differences

The data variables most commonly cross classified with POWP are Statistical Local Area of Usual Residence Census Night (SLAUCP) and Method of Travel to Work (MTWP). It should be noted that the census questions for these variables relate to different reference periods. Statistical Local Area of Usual Residence Census Night (SLAUCP) and Method of Travel to Work (MTWP) both refer to Census day. Workplace address (POWP) refers to the main job held last week, i.e. the week before Census Night.

The POWP question refers to **last week** rather than Census Night to improve comparability of census labour force data with other ABS labour force data. The different reference periods for these questions can produce outliers in the data where:

- people changed their place of work between last week and Census Night; or
- people changed their place of usual residence during the week prior to Census Night; or
- people were employed in the week prior to the Census but were no longer employed on Census day.

Where place of enumeration data is being referenced, additional possible outliers are people who were not at their usual residence on Census Night, such as people on holiday.

### Person's Place of Work

One issue identified with 1996 Census JTW data was that some people responded by providing the head office address of their employer, rather than the address of the actual location where they worked. For 2001, the equivalent question asked for 'the employer's workplace address'. This was done to minimise the number of respondents reporting the address of a head office rather than their actual workplace destination. This change has been carried over to the 2006 Census.

### No fixed place of work

The instructions for the question on place of work were changed with a view to improving the quality of the data. For the 2001 Census, the instructions included: "For persons with no fixed place of work: - if the person usually travels to a depot to start work, provide depot address". This was done to capture the maximum possible POWP information by coding the 'main place of work' of those with no fixed workplace address, but who usually journeyed to a specific address in order to begin work (for the main job held last week). This change has been carried over to the 2006 Census.

In cases where a respondent stated that they neither had a fixed place of work nor a depot, they were coded to the Destination Zone of 9499.

## DATA COMPARABILITY

Although POWP data have been produced from Australian population censuses since 1971, data is not comparable across

censuses. The POWP Study Areas and Destination Zones used to analyse data for each census have been redefined to take into account the needs of the State/Territory Transport Authorities as well as changes and growth within each state and territory.

Furthermore, in 1996 JTW data were available only for those people who worked in the Detailed Study Areas. Any person who was enumerated in a study area but gave a workplace address that was outside this study area was coded as 'Worked Outside Study Area'. For example, if a person commuted from Mittagong to work in Sydney, JTW data for that person could not be obtained. For the 2006 Census, the workplace address given by employed people has been coded to both a Statistical Local Area and a Destination Zone if they work in a Detailed Study Area, or an Extended Study Area.

## AVAILABILITY OF AREA CODES AND BOUNDARIES

To assist ABS clients in understanding workplace address data, listings of Statistical Local Areas are available from the ABS National Information and Referral Service. Destination Zone boundaries are determined by the transport authority in each state or territory. Clients who would like to obtain the boundaries in digital or mapped form should contact the relevant STA. Workplace address data below the Statistical Local Area is not fully validated by the ABS and should only be used in consultation with the relevant STA.

## CONTACTS FOR POWP DESTINATION ZONE BOUNDARIES

### New South Wales

John Peachman  
Transport Data  
Ministry of Transport  
GPO Box 1620  
SYDNEY NSW 2001  
Ph: 02 9268 2997  
email: John.Peachman@transport.nsw.gov.au

### Victoria

Brett Coxhead  
GIS Consultant  
Information Services  
VicRoads  
60 Denmark St KEW 3101

Ph: (03) 9854 2529  
email: brett.coxhead@roads.vic.gov.au

### Queensland

Greg Brown  
Principal Advisor (Transport Data)  
Transport Research and Analysis Centre  
Integrated Transport Planning Division  
Queensland Transport  
GPO Box 213  
BRISBANE QLD 4001  
Ph: 07 3117 5749  
email: greg.w.brown@transport.qld.gov.au

### South Australia

Lindsay Oxlard  
Manager,  
Road Transport Policy and Investment  
Department of Transport, Energy and  
Infrastructure  
GPO Box 1815  
ADELAIDE SA 5000  
Ph: 08 8204 8805  
email: lindsay.oxlad@saugov.sa.gov.au

### Western Australia

John Patterson  
Senior GIS Analyst  
Applied Research and Modelling Branch  
Department for Planning & Infrastructure  
Albert Facey House  
469–489 Wellington St  
Perth WA 6000  
Ph: 08 9264 7783  
Fax: 08 9264 7566  
email: john.patterson@dpi.wa.gov.au

### Tasmania

Ian Hughes  
Manager State Infrastructure Planning System  
Department of Infrastructure, Energy &  
Resources  
GPO Box 936  
HOBART TAS 7001  
Ph: 03 6233 2734  
email: ian.hughes@dier.tas.gov.au

### Northern Territory

Greg Scott  
Director  
Transport Policy and Planning  
Northern Territory Department of Planning &  
Infrastructure  
GPO Box 2520  
Darwin NT 0801  
Ph: 08 8924 7007  
email: gregb.scott@nt.gov.au

**Australian Capital Territory**

Paul Isaks  
Transport Specialist  
Transport Regulation and Planning Branch  
Office of Transport  
Department of Territory and Municipal  
Services  
GPO Box 158  
CANBERRA ACT 2601  
Ph: 02 6207 1720  
Fax: 02 6207 6397  
email: paul.isaks@act.gov.au